

SCREEN THRILLS

ILLUSTRATED

MEN BEHIND THE MASK OF ZORRO



ALAN LADD

TRIBUTE TO A
TOUGH GUY



BUCK JONES FIGHTING
WESTERNS

THE SCREENS WILDEST SUPER HEROES



This Bold Caballero's daredevil exploits are chronicled in detail beginning on page 7.



ACTION

**SPEAKS
LOUDER
THAN
WORDS**

In short, **SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED** has kept its promise to its readers. We have brought you the movies' most exciting moments—the ones that YOU wanted to see in pictures and print. Now, in our third year of publication, we promise to continue on in the trend-setting style that we originated and deliver more features and photos on the personalities and movies which you've asked us to cover.

This issue we pay tribute to adventure here **ALAN LADD**, take a long hard look at **ZORRO**, fly and fight with **SUPERMAN & FLASH GORDIN**, hit the saddle with **BUCK JONES** and review lots more in the way of thrill-packed **SERIALS**

and other great celluloid treasures.

Editors Sam Sherman and Bob Price have once again utilized their multi-faceted skills to deliver the STI goods. Drawing on their vast knowledge of vintage motion pictures and production techniques, in combination with interview know-how, they have gone directly to the source sources to make STI the unique magazine it is. The following material has been prepared for you and will be seen in future issues of **SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED**.

Exclusive interviews with four great Hollywood stars, behind-the-scenes information on a fabulous **TARZAN** epic, stories on ten never-

covered, thrill-packed **CLIFFHANGER CLASSICS**, the lowdown on Hollywood's seven greatest fan-boys and lots more from exciting movies both old and new.

The thrill you get from a spectacular epic movie, the thrill generated by death-defying stunts in action, the thrill of side-splitting comedy, the thrill of a great film here doubling to the rescue and the thrill of tense screen dramas—all these are **SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED**. Relive the most unforgettable movie moments with us each issue. Your favorite screen stars, comedians and adventure heroes will be here waiting—don't be late!

STL MATINEE MAIL

THE STARS SPEAK

A good friend sent me an October issue of Screen Thrills and how I have enjoyed looking it over. You really have something—it is grand. Being one of the old timers it did me lots of good to think back a few years while reading the magazine. I worked in my first picture in 1910 and from then on for many years. Seeing pictures of so many of my old friends in Screen Thrills made me very happy.

I played in the first silent serial for Selig and then, of all things, had a part in the first sound serial. I am looking forward to reading your next issue, you have a great magazine, and please know that I wish each and every one of you the best of everything for many coming years.

Edmund Cobb
Hollywood, California

The story you did on me was very good. I enjoyed showing it to Red Skelton and Jerry Lewis.

Milton Frome
Hollywood, California
(Featured in STL No. 7)

Here I am wishing to thank you for the wonderful spread in Screen Thrills. Words cannot express my feelings when reading about some of the "old timers" and seeing their pictures. The stories are wonderfully written and very interesting to read. You are doing a wonderful job, keep it up as I know the "old timers" appreciate what you are doing the same as I do. What is even more surprising is the number of people here in the village who remember some of the people in Screen Thrills. My personal wishes that your magazine enjoys a long and prosperous life.

Max V. Wright
Boulder City, Nevada
(Featured in STL No. 7)

I thought it was a very well put together article. The pictures turned out fine. My family and friends enjoyed it very much.

Fred Scott
Hollywood, California
(Featured in STL No. 8)

● Most of these authentic comments are from personalities whose careers have been covered in STL. Edmund Cobb, one of Hollywood's great veterans of the screen, has given movie adventure fans a full share of action packed entertainment. We are planning a career story on him for a future issue. Along these lines, STL editors just recently screened two of Ed Cobb's outstanding silent starring Westerns—RIDERS OF

THE RANGE (Traut—1923) and FANGS OF DESTINY (Universal—1927). A rugged he-man, talented actor and pleasing personality all rolled into one is how he came across in these vintage productions. STL editors also talked to distinguished actress Fay Wray, who was one of Ed's leading ladies, and who mentioned that she held fond memories of the films they did together. In recent years Edmund Cobb has proven to be one of the movies' and TV's more competent character actors. We at STL wish him our best as we look forward to seeing him in more and more outstanding roles.



Edmund Cobb in 1927

CALLING ALL STUNTMEN

Long a staunch, enthusiastic admirer of stunts and stuntmen, it has given me particular pleasure to see Republic Pictures get their due in your magazine. The acknowledged leaders in serials and westerns, it follows that Republic would have had the finest stuntmen on the payroll.

I hope SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED will do a story on the two "real" heroes of Republic's serials . . . Tom Steele and Dale Van Sickel! Working as a team, Tom and Dale took turns doubling all the Republic serial leading men throughout most of the forties and fifties . . . with Republic actually choosing their serial stars to match the stuntmen. Now each serial had an "action heavy," the chief villain's right hand man who lasted till the last episode while all the other bad guys bit the dust, one by one. If Tom was stunting for the hero, Dale did the doubling honors for the action heavy . . . and vice-versa. They had the speed, style and cour-

age that makes great stuntmen! A long overdue tribute is due them!

I was extremely interested in Bart Andrews' letter which stated his ambitions regarding stuntwork and displayed a solid background knowledge of the subject. I am currently engaged in film projects which employ just such fights and stunts. If Bart and other amateur stuntmen, over twenty years old and living in New York area are interested in learning more about the possibility of stuntwork regarding my project, please contact me immediately. I will answer all inquiries personally.

Bob Miller
217 Wajner St.
Brooklyn 6, New York

● We are planning lots more in the way of stunting stories and realize the great contributions that daredevils of the screen like Tom Steele and Dale Van Sickel have given to true action shots everywhere. To see some thrill-a-minute stunts of stuntmen in action, don't miss this issue's SMASHING STUNTMEN on page 48.

SILENT SCREEN TREASURES

I do wish and hope that you would dig back to the days when serials were the king of entertainment and the product that brought the customer back to the box office week after week and in a lot of instances several times a week so that the exploits of our screen heroes would be faithfully followed.

I have several fine big books on the history of the movies and while they are great in themselves, your magazine is far and above their scope. That is because they have frozen themselves to that one volume and there they end. Whereas your magazine continues to publish and issue after issue brings out articles and photographs that show other phases of a life that we knew very little about at the time that those movies were being produced.

A most enjoyable feature of your magazine is that you seek out many of our old time favorites and thus you bring us up to-date with the stars that we knew and followed and still hold dear in the memory of the wonderful performances that they gave for our enjoyment. Your magazine with its fine articles and photographs bring us back to the days of a glorious youth and back to the neighborhood theater.

I know that this letter may be a little long but I think a lot of the old time fans will be interested in the names I'm going to bring out for you to cover, including an actor who played in quite a few pictures in those pioneer days and has been overlooked by the chaps who write those big fat books about the movies and without much variation write up the same actors, the big big stars. Many a fine actor of those days is continually overlooked because the studios in those days were not geared to properly exploit their acting properties and as a consequence some of the favorites of our day became forgotten men.

The one I have in mind was a diminutive cowboy star with the name of "Shorty" Hamilton. We do wish you would give us some photos and a story about him as to who he was and what became of him. I believe he was active in the years 1915-1921.

Others that we would like to see some stories on are Neal Hart who was billed as "America's Pal." He was a real cowboy as was Joe Ryan who was on the Vitaphone roster as the heavy opposite William Duncan. Another real cowboy was Vester Pegg who came out of rodeos and

(Continued on page 6)



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4 MATINEE MAIL—We continue to get our share of fan mail, that time-honored "stamp of approval" in the magazine industry.

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48 THE SMASHING STUNTMEN—Good news for all Pa Jector fans! STI's venerable vault-keeper broadens the scope of his operations in the form of a full-length article!





(Continued from page 4)

was a star rider with the Miller Brothers 101 Ranch and for years and years gave wonderful support to Harry Carey and other Universal Western stars. A fine cowboy was Jim Corey, who I still think is active in films.

It seems to this writer that you are a bit slow in presenting the readers of your fine magazine a story on Broncho Billy Anderson, Hollywood's first movie cowboy. He is still alive thank God and it seems quite in order for you to prepare the "Life of Broncho Billy." There are few people of the movie industry around who can go way back to when the movies were young. Anderson's life covers so great a span that his story should be written at length and in his case the story of his life could be in several installments.

Then too, there is William Duncan the famous Vitaphone and later Universal serial star and his two beautiful leading ladies, Carol Holloway and later on Edith Johnson. In time Miss Johnson married Duncan. Last time we saw him was in a Hopalong Cassidy western, also appearing in that picture was Clara Kimball Young.

One or two more and I'll close. The story of the serials will not be complete unless you cover the life of Eddie Polo, Francis Ford, Charles Hitchison, Ben Wilson, George Larkin, Pearl White and her great rival, Ruth Roland and all the other wonderful serial queens such as Marie Welcamp, Nova Corbin, Ann Little, Lilian Lorraine and Jean Paige, who married Albert E. Smith of Vitaphone and left's not forget Juanita Hansen.

You are writing and publishing the History of the Movies and we hope you will continue in this very interesting work.

Tom Dino

West New York, New Jersey

● Glad you like our STL style of screen scavenging. We realize the importance of the pioneer

partners that you have mentioned and are continuously working on new stories in this area. Think you'll enjoy this issue's article on amazing "Silent Bill" Hardcock on page 42. You'll find many of your favorites, including Francis Ford and George Larkin, covered in the



Francis Ford

feature. The photo here of Francis Ford shows him as he appeared in his brother's (John Ford) production of THE QUIET MAN, which Republic released in 1952.

STAR OF WESTERNS

I noticed your magazine entitled, "Screen Thrills." It was very interesting, especially the articles on the old time Cowboy Stars, like Tom Mix, Ken Maynard, etc. When I was a kid my favorite was none of the ones you have mentioned. Probably to you and others he was not a Western star, but to me he was tops. His name was Jack Holt. Some of his Westerns played to full houses back in the 20's. Some of the names of his pictures are as follows: The Thundering Herd, Man of The Forest, The Enchanted Hill, Wanderers of the Wasteland, Born to the West, Wild Horse Mesa, Sunset Pass, Forlorn River and many others. I and many others would sure appreciate it if you could write an article on him. It will probably be the same old story. He was not a Western star. Never the less Jack Holt was one of the best to portray the west.

John McCullough
Mt. Vernon, Ohio

● Any solid STL reader can tell you that "it will not be the same old story," if we do a feature on Jack Holt. Our editors always seek out the unusual and when covering the career of an old favorite usually turn up much new and uncovered information. By definition, Jack Holt was certainly a Western star as he starred in Westerns. However, he did many other kinds of films too, as is the case with other Western stars. People like Bill Elliott, Don Barry, John Wayne, Bob Livingston, Bob Steele and many more are most certainly Western stars, but they have also starred in many non-Westerns. If you like an actor why worry about what he's classified as?

Just as we were going to press word was sadly received that a great screen actor had died. On March 23, 1964 a film favorite of millions passed on—Peter Lorre. His movie personality as the "man of menace" was offset by a warm and cordial nature in "real life." I feel extremely fortunate in having met this wonderful actor and was strongly inspired by him as an individual. In the



Fall of 1962, Fanny Ackerman invited me to come with him to Producers Studio in Hollywood, where AIP's THE RAVEN was winding up its last day of shooting. Having met and talked to Lorre in the past, Fanny was well acquainted with him when he introduced me to the former "Mr. Moto." Peter Lorre was so friendly and without affectation that conversation about his various roles came easily and very informally. I remember him commenting on Warners' MASK OF DIMITRIOS (1944) as one of his better films and one of his favorites too. He was "good" in that one and played an unusual type of screen hero. This man with the sinister screen personality was a "regular guy" and those who knew him well didn't think twice about it. I feel privileged to have shared an informal conversation with Peter Lorre. No matter how "evil" he was in the movies, he really could do only "good." As an actor he quite amply proved this. We, his audience will miss him.

—Sam Sherman



"Silent Bill" Hardcock

● Keep reading STL and keep writing to: Cliff Hanger, SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED, 1426 East Washington Lane, Philadelphia, Penna. 19138.

THE MEN BEHIND THE MASK OF ZORRO

By BOB PRICE

THESE GREAT STARS
HAVE MADE ZORRO,
THE SPANISH WORD FOR
'FOX', SYNONYMOUS WITH
ACTION IN ANY LANGUAGE!





Continuing the precedent established by Doug Fairbanks almost twenty years before, Reed Hodley treated audiences to some exciting swordplay in **ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION**.

A heavily-masked Bob Livingston portrayed Johnston McCulley's doring rogue in **THE BOLD CABALLERO**, Republic's first 'Natural Color' production in 1936.



WHEN JOHNSTON McCULLEY penned his original story "The Curse of Capistrano" in 1919 detailing the exploits of Don Diego Vega—the fop by day and masked avenger by night—he really started something! For over the years the character he created has furnished the basis for many adventurous film sagas of Old California in the 'Days of the Dona.'

Hollywood has produced no less than five authentic Zorros as well as several "descendants" of the original Vega. Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. was the first Hollywoodian to recognize the cinematic potential in McCulley's yarn and purchased the screen rights in 1920. His feature, **THE MARK OF ZORRO**, proved a new type of role for the dashing Doug and launched him upon his fabulous never-to-be-forgotten career of screen "swashbuckling" in costume dramas.

Doug set the pace

Bringing his amazing athletic abilities to the part of the daring Zorro and well-known comic skill to the role of Diego, Doug succeeded in casting the classic mold from which all ensuing interpretations were to be patterned. All this was to be expected from such a popular performer but, if anything, he outdid himself in the role of the "fop." Doug's riding, fighting and swordsmanship were perfection itself; but audiences and critics alike were captivated by his antics as the languid, perfumed ladiesman who seems content to loaf through life in fancy clothes and rich surroundings.

The film's story, too, set the style for most of the screen plays to follow. The aristocratic Don Diego returning from Spain where he has been educated, is horrified at the tyranny prevailing in Spanish California. As "Senor Zorro," Diego wages a one-man war against the villainous Captain Ramon (Robert McKim) who is in cahoots with the corrupt Governor (George Periolat). In order to divert suspicion from himself, Diego assumes the guise of the simple-minded, handkerchief-flourishing dandy, fooling everyone including his lady-love, Lolita (Marguerite de la Motte).

In 1925, Doug filmed a sequel entitled **DON Q. SON OF ZORRO**, repeating the success of the original. As was also done in Rudolph Valentino's **THE SON OF THE SHIEK** (1926), Fairbanks played a dual role, as both the son and the



He started it all! The one and only Douglas Fairbanks, Sr. rescuing his fair lady, Marguerite de la Motte, and inflicting **THE MARK OF ZORRO** upon villain Robert McKim (1920).

father who comes to the aid of his offspring.

It was not until 1936 that Senor Zorro again slashed his way across the screen; this time in "natural color." **THE BOLD CABALLERO** was Republic Pictures' first color film but it was not full color as we know it today. Instead, Magnacolor, one of the screen's early two-color processes was used. Developed by Consolidated Film Industries, its tints were predominately blue and orange and the process was also used on three Grand National features of the period—**WE'RE IN THE LEGION NOW**, **CAPTAIN CALAMITY** and **DEVIL ON HORSEBACK**—under the name "Hirlicolor," for the producer of those films, George A. Hirliman.

The star of **THE BOLD CABALLERO** was Robert Livingston, Republic's Western lead who was rapidly rising to box-office fame by

way of that studio's 1936 serial **THE VIGILANTES ARE COMING** and its **THREE MESQUITEERS** series. Director Wells Root, who also did the screen treatment, adapted the Fairbanks idea into an exciting remake which gave Livingston the opportunity of being the screen's first talking Zorro.

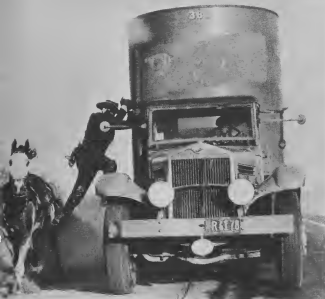
a taxing situation

Root's adaptation had Diego incensed by the cruelty and taxation being imposed upon Indians of Santa Cruz by the Commandante (Sig Rumann) of the local garrison. When a Governor (Robert Warwick) appointed by the King of Spain arrives in California to take over the province, the Commandante kills him blaming it on Zorro. Diego charms his way into the Commandante's confidence un-

der the ruse of arranging a marriage with the Governor's orphaned daughter, Isabella (Heather Angel), which will enable the Commandante to gain legal control of the locality. Many striking situations, laced with sensational stunts and swordplay, lead to the film's exciting conclusion.

Bob Livingston recently discussed **THE BOLD CABALLERO**'s filming with us and made several interesting comments on a variety of subjects including the merits of Magnacolor, complete with a graphic description of its hues. Of particular interest was the fact that he, too, was taught the finer points of fencing by Hollywood's sword specialist, the late Fred Cavens.

"Yes, Fred knew his business alright," Bob recalled. "He taught us all. In addition to myself, screen Zorros Fairbanks, Tyrone Power and Guy Williams all benefited by



ZORRO RIDES AGAIN—Republic's first Zorro serial smash! Yakima Canutt, doubling for star John Carrall, executes the fabulous horse-drawn truck transfer and, below, Duncan Renaldo admires portrait of Carroll's great-grandfather, the original Zorro.



his tutelage. Fred passed away in 1962 and has been sorely missed around the studios. As a swordsman, he had no peer."

Of sufficient interest to note at this point was the release, just a few weeks prior to **THE BOLD CABALLERO**, of a pseudo-Zorro film, also in color. This was **THE PHANTOM OF SANTA FE**, a product of Burroughs-Tarzan Pictures, in Cinecolor; a picture with a curious history.

'Hawk' to 'Phantom'

Actually filmed some half-dozen years previously as **THE HAWK**, this feature was never released due to technical difficulties, not the least of which was star Norman Kerry's bad speaking voice. A popular leading man of the silents, Kerry found this to be his downfall in the talkies. Ashton Dearholt, a former actor-turned-producer and one of the partners in the Burroughs-Tarzan company, became interested in the footage in 1936, and managed to turn it into a saleable property. Redubbed with a completely dubbed voice track plus musical score, the resulting effort was entitled **THE PHANTOM OF SANTA FE** and sold as a brand new film "many months in the making."

THE HAWK was originally filmed in Multicolor, another pioneer bi-pack (or two-color) system, but by 1936 these labs had been taken over by Cinecolor, who furnished the final **PHANTOM** release prints. While not an exact imitation of Zorro in that the hero did not wear a mask, the screenplay did follow the classic story line laid down by McCulley. Kerry portrayed the lazy, sleepy fop as a disguise and became the mysterious "Hawk" to avenge the wrongs perpetrated by villain Frank Mayo and his band of renegades.

in modern times

Republic had no idea of letting the daring Zorro remain as inactive as he had previously and so, shortly after **THE BOLD CABALLERO**, put our hero to work in his first serial, the classic **ZORRO RIDES AGAIN** released in 1937. There was a switch, however, in that this was a "modern" Western, and Zorro was no longer Don Diego but instead his "great-grandson," James Vega (John Carrall).

This was the first joint effort of Republic's famous William Witney-



Trapped in the cave of Doc Del Oro, it looks like ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION will be too late to save star Reed Hadley in this scene from Republic's 1938 action classic.



The famous "unmasking" scene from **ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION**. Reed Hadley prepares to remove the helmet of Dan Del Oro, supposedly re-incarnated Yacqui idol portrayed by Montague Shaw. Below, Don Diego serenades the beautiful Isabella (Bob Livingston and Heather Angel) in **THE BOLD CABALLERO**.



John English directing team and the serial-duo chalked up their initial score for this one. A plot centering around the activities of industrialist Marsden (Noah Beery) and his henchman El Lobo (Dick Alexander) to sabotage the building of the California-Yucatan railroad, provided audiences with some of the most stirring situations ever seen in a sagebrush serial.

Behind the mask through the entire 12 chapters was that dean of stuntmen, Yakima Canutt, who was never better. He had previous experience in "Zorro-ing" for he had doubled in the Livingston feature. Unlike the previous film, which had much in the way of dramatics, the serial, being mostly action, furnished stuntman Yak with almost as much footage as star Carroll!

organizes "Legion"

ZORRO RIDES AGAIN was, needless to say, a slashing success and prompted another Republic serial, **ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION** in 1939. For this version, audiences were taken back a few decades in time; again to the days of Don Diego. Reed Hadley, long before his emergence as a TV star in **RACKET SQUAD** and **PUBLIC DEFENDER**, became the third actor to portray the original Zorro on the screen.

ZORRO'S FIGHTING LEGION was the first of the Zorro adventures to take place in Mexico, rather than California. Here the "Legion" was organized to combat the activities of Montague Shaw who, while masquerading as Don Del Oro, a Yacqui Indian idol, tried to incite an uprising in order to stop the flow of gold to Juarez in Mexico City. Witney and English repeated their earlier triumph, again aided and abetted by Yakima Canutt in the saddle.

plays 'Fox' for Fox

In November 1940, almost twenty years to the day after Fairbanks released **THE MARK OF ZORRO**, 20th Century-Fox brought forth the first "official" re-make bearing the original title. Tyrone Power starred and made a valiant, albeit not too successful, attempt to inherit the Fairbanks mantle. More of an actor than a true swashbuckler, Power's performance was thought by many critics to suffer by comparison with that of Fairbanks. Indeed, one New York reviewer, remembering Doug



In the classic Zorro tradition, John Correll championed the local peons and, in addition, ended the attempts to sabotage the California-Yucatan Railroad in **ZORRO RIDES AGAIN** (1937).

as a "swashbuckler who swashed with magnificent arrogance and swished, when required, with great style," thought that Power rather reversed the role and "overdid the swishing with a swash more beautiful than bold." Nevertheless, the Fox film featured a rousing finale in the form of a jim-dandy duel between the unmasked Zorro and the villainous Captain Esteban Pasquale (Basil Rathbone), with luscious Linda Darnell as the prize.

Republic next brought Zorro back into their serial fold with two cliffhangers based on the exploits of some rather contrived "descendants" of Don Diego. About the only

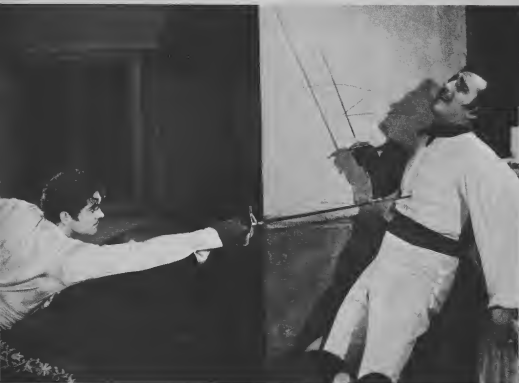
thing George Turner, the **SON OF ZORRO** (1947), and Clayton Moore, the **GHOST OF ZORRO** (1949), had in common with their illustrious predecessors, was a similar black outfit. For one of Republic's biggest frauds, though, we must turn back to 1944.

the fraudulent Zorro

Zorro had it easy in '44, for in **ZORRO'S BLACK WHIP** the only time he appears was in the title of the film! After a single credit acknowledging McCulley as the creator of the character, the chapter-

play went about its business of depicting the hazards experienced by the "Whip" (Linda Stirling), a mysterious figure clad in a Zorro-like costume.

Walt Disney added a Zorro series to his TV schedule in the late fifties. Reverting to the old locale, these shows starred Guy Williams as Diego and placed a rather too heavy emphasis on the comedy provided by Henry Calvin as a sort of Oliver Hardy-ish "Sergeant Garcia." Some of the early episodes were directed by Bill Witney himself, however, and reflected much of the flavor of the early Republic serials. Music by William Lava, who had written



The sign of the "Z" heralds the end of Captain Esteban Pasquale (Basil Rathbone) in 20th Century-Fox's remake of **THE MARK OF ZORRO** (1940). Administering the coup de grace is Tyrone Power.

themes for the Republics, also contributed to this mood and many stunts were performed for Williams by Dave Sharpe, another old Republic stand-by.

revamped for theatres

In 1959, some active minds at Republic put together feature versions of **ZORRO RIDES AGAIN** and **GHOST OF ZORRO**, distributed them theatrically, and hoped to benefit from the public interest generated by the TV show. Not to be outdone, Disney assembled a feature-length compilation himself and released it in 1960 titled **THE SIGN OF ZORRO**.

In recent years there have been a few Zorro pictures produced in Italy, including some starring ex-Hollywood actor Frank Latimore, but to date, these have received little exposure on these shores. It

The most recent of Hollywood's long line of Zorros was Guy Williams, at the Disney TV stable.

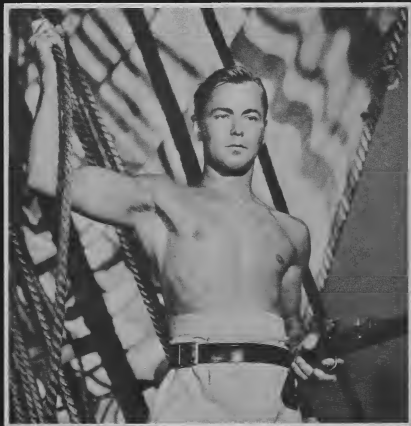


seems safe to predict, though, that Zorro's American film career is far from over, and that it will not be too long before he is once again charging before the cameras of the film capital.

Many factors are responsible for the undying appeal of this colorful knight-errant; and when he dashes about the countryside, brandishing his blade and carving "Z's" into the opposition, each member of the audience experiences his own particular thrill. But no doubt the basic lure is the sense of participation in classic high adventure that he imparts. Amid the complexities of this modern age, it becomes more and more of a necessity for both young and old alike to periodically "escape" into that bygone era where bold caballeros defended honor and womanhood with equal aplomb; all to the tune of galloping hoofs, thundering pistols and flashing blades!



Yakima Conutt, this time doubling for Bob Livingston, leaves Zorro's own individualized calling cord upon the body of Charles "Slim" Whittaker in **THE BOLD CABALLERO**.



ALAN LADD

TRIBUTE TO A TOUGH GUY

One of Hollywood's great adventure stars is gone, but the world won't soon forget the smashing action he brought to the screen!

IT WAS WITH immediate and shocking impact that the SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED staff learned the tragic news of Alan Ladd's death. Hours before the information was released on the east coast, STI editors were speaking by phone with Max Terhune, famed Western screen comedian, who was talking from California. Max had



Alan Ladd and Van Heflin go after the heavies in classic *SHANE* brawl.

received this bad news early and sadly relayed it. He had known Alan Ladd due to personal appearance shows done in conjunction with Paramount Pictures. Their first informal meeting however, had humorous undertones according to Max:

"Back about 1942 or 1943, I was returning home from San Francisco by train after doing a show there. I spotted a good looking young man in uniform who was sitting near me and thought he looked familiar. I asked him if anybody had ever told him that he looked like Alan Ladd. Was I surprised when he answered: 'I am Alan Ladd!' He then went on to ask: 'Tell me Max, are you still making Westerns out at Republic?' Well, that started us off talking, and to this day I still think of him as being friendly and natural. He was not a phony."

The Ladd story is not one of overnight success or of undeserved popularity. He worked hard to get to the top and when he got there, his own abilities and talent kept him there. He was born in Hot Springs, Arkansas on September 3, 1913. At the age of eight California became his home when his family moved to North Hollywood. Enjoying phys-

ical activity, Alan was a track and swimming star at North Hollywood High. He also liked to swim at city pools, which contributed to his daily exercise and good health. Members of his school music and dramatics department saw that he had talent and decided to give him a chance to display it. This came in the form of selecting him to play and sing the Koko role in their production of *THE MIKADO*.

no stars wanted

As the big studios in the 1930's were always looking to add new youngsters to their star rosters, trainee programs were instituted by most of the major companies. Fresh from refusing an athletic scholarship to the University of Southern California (as he felt that earning a living was more important) was young Alan Ladd. Spotted by studio talent scouts from Universal, he was selected to become a member of their future-star experiment. Unfortunately, the dramatic development plan failed and Alan was dropped along with another hopeful—Tyrone Power! This did not dismay him however, he knew he could always find work somewhere and his physical

fitness would always come in handy. In 1932 he scored as the West Coast diving champ and also was the holder of the 50 yard free-style interscholastic record.

the grip

With ambition under his belt he felt ready to conquer the world and started by taking a job with the now defunct *San Fernando Sun-Record*. Proving adaptable to a variety of assignments, he worked as a reporter and also as the paper's advertising manager. With a need to establish himself in a profession that he felt comfortable in, Alan tried operating a cafe and selling cash registers. Neither assignment lasted very long. He felt he had to get back to the movies. A friend who knew Alan's capabilities helped him get a job at Warner Bros. as a "grip". This was the chance he needed to once again get close to acting via the studios who thrived on that very art. As he had been a high diver, the supervisors knew that he was more conditioned to high places than the average worker was. So, Alan was assigned to do all the "high work" This meant the job of rigging the scaffolding for the lights that were

most highly placed above the sets being used that day. He did this work very well and in later years, studio workers he had toiled with still respected him as a top "grip", even though he was a leading Hollywood star at that time.

Beyond supplying him with a regular salary, the job as "grip" really did nothing to advance his acting career. This led to Alan's taking dramatics courses and instruction at the Bard Dramatic School. Around this time he broke into the film studios again as an extra and bit player. Film Historian John Cocchi recently commented on Ladd's little known small parts: "Alan Ladd first appeared before the cameras in 1933. He was an extra in *PIGSKIN PARADE* (20th Century Fox 1936), played unbilled roles in *THE LAST TRAIN FROM MADRID* (Paramount 1937), *THE HOWARDS OF VIRGINIA* (Columbia 1940), *CITIZEN KANE* (RKO 1941) and although credited as being in *BORN TO THE WEST* (Paramount 1938), he is not in evidence in that film and I know of nobody who has spotted him in it! Adding to the confusion is the re-release of *BORN TO THE WEST* as *HELLTOWN*, which plays up Ladd in the advertising."

After leaving dramatic school, about the time he was playing small parts in feature pictures and appearing in commercial films and "Soundies" musical shorts, Alan Ladd was hired as a radio actor by Los Angeles station KFWB. As the legend goes, screen star turned agent Sue Carol heard him on the air and was impressed by his voice. Her ability to recognize talent and direct a performer's career awakened Hollywood to Alan Ladd's screen potential. His parts became better and better with Sue Carol in his corner. They were later married on March 15, 1942.

killer hired

According to the *Ladd legend*, it was Sue Carol who interested Paramount Pictures and director Frank Tuttle in this two-fisted actor, which led to his being cast in a key role in 1942's *THIS GUN FOR HIRE*. Although his name was number four in the cast, after those of Veronica Lake, Robert Preston and Laird Cregar, Alan Ladd *did* receive a big play in the film's advertising, as Paramount executives knew they had a winner in this actor. His name may have been fourth; however his picture rated top space in most of



Ladd and Ben Johnson brought an explosive fist fight to the screen in George Stevens' *SHANE*.



Frame blowup of Alan Ladd from the 1940 motion picture **CAPTAIN CAREY, U.S.A.** As there were few good stills taken of him in this production (he had a small part), a re-release distributor had this film frame enlarged and played up Ladd as one of the movie's stars.

Alan Ladd in his trenchcoat meant excitement for movie fans in **CAPTAIN CAREY U.S.A.**



the film's ads. Some of them featured special catchlines which also made him stand out: **ALAN LADD, a new star! See him now—remember him forever in a sensational role that will burn itself into your heart!**

On March 25, 1942 **MOTION PICTURE EXHIBITOR** spoke of **THIS GUN FOR HIRE** and Alan Ladd: "Alan Ladd, known as the Raven, professional killer, is hired by Laird Cregar, executive of Nitro Corporation and owner of a night club, to kill Frank Ferguson, ex-employee who has a secret poison gas formula, stolen from Nitro, to sell or give to the Government. Back of Cregar is Tully Marshall, aged, ill head of Nitro. . . . Ladd on patriotic motives, gets Marshall and Cregar to sign confessions of guilt. Ladd kills Cregar, Marshall dies of a heart ailment, and Ladd is killed. . . . It ranks with the better product of its type. Ladd is an ace killer and makes a good impression."

who's starring now?

THIS GUN FOR HIRE was an immediate sensation and established the pattern for many later Ladd portrayals. With his boost to major stardom also came a landslide of so-called Alan Ladd re-releases. Films which he had made several years earlier, none of which he actually starred in, were hastily put out again with new advertising, playing up Ladd in no uncertain terms. Typical of these reissues were: UA's 1940 **CAPTAIN CAUTION**, Paramount's 1940 **LIGHT OF WESTERN STARS** and PRC's 1941 **PAPER BULLETS**, brought out again as **GANGS INC.** In 1943 Monogram released their 1940 production of **HER FIRST ROMANCE** as **RIGHT MAN**, this time billing featured player Alan Ladd over stars Edith Fellows and Wilbur Evans. Reviewers that year noted: "This is a reissue of **HER FIRST ROMANCE**. The added value of the cast names now makes it a more important picture than heretofore, particularly in the case of Ladd. Jacqueline Wells is now known as Julie Bishop, and has also come far since."

parade of hits

Winning a fabulous response from audiences and critics everywhere, Alan Ladd became Hollywood's latest sensation. His acting ability and forceful personality crashed through the movie screen to estab-

lish a fantastic legion of fans for him. The Ladd pictures paid off well at the box office, so well that a Paramount executive once stated that when the studio needed money they just made a new Alan Ladd movie. Typical of the critics' impressions of Ladd are these bravos from **MOTION PICTURE EXHIBITOR: THE GLASS KEY**—"... some good acting by Ladd and Donlevy ... Ladd, who has developed into a first-rate menace, does as good a job here as he did in **THIS GUN FOR HIRE**." **LUCKY JORDAN**—"A curious mixture of heroics and fast action, the selling angle is Ladd, who is just about the toughest thing to hit the screen since Humphrey Bogart. As the completely unimoral gangster in the early part of the picture, he is excellent." **CHINA**—"It has the powerful Ladd draw ... Ladd's regeneration is believable."

Alan Ladd served his country in real life as well as by fighting the wartime enemy on the screen. He served in the armed forces during World War II and when he returned to Hollywood, he found he was even more popular than when he left. For over ten years Alan quickened the pulses of action hungry male moviegoers as he warmed the blood of their female counterparts in the solid screen entertainment that Paramount was starring him in. The 1952 release of Warner Bros.' **THE IRON MISTRESS** marked his return to the other studios as he continued in the type of roles he had made famous.

Shane!

In 1953 however, Alan Ladd demonstrated perhaps the greatest display of his dramatic skills in George Stevens' **SHANE**—the classic Western. All over the world this production was hailed as Ladd's most important since **THIS GUN FOR HIRE**. **NEW YORK WORLD-TELEGRAM**: "Alan Ladd's unadorned but magnetic presence is an ideal choice for the title role." **NEW YORK MIRROR**: "Ladd has never been seen to better advantage. ... He shows new facets of depth under Stevens' direction." **NEW YORK JOURNAL AMERICAN**: "It's Ladd's best screen performance to date. ..." **BOXOFFICE**: "In the title role, Alan Ladd contributes a strong, restrained performance that easily qualifies as the best of his career." **THE HOLLYWOOD REPORTER**: "Alan Ladd



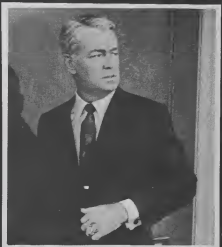
Making a tough screen Jim Bowie, Alan Ladd uses the famed "Bowtie knife" in encounter with Ned Young. (**THE IRON MISTRESS**)

Ladd and Loretta Young prepare for the worst in war torn CHINA.



the CARPETBAGGERS

These exciting character studies of Alan Ladd represent him at his dramatic best in his last movie. He did such a good job in this film that a sequel, NEVADA SMITH, was planned for him to star in. The new production is still under consideration, but finding an actor to measure up to Ladd's standards is no simple job.



turns in his finest performance since he first crashed into stardom with *THIS GUN FOR HIRE*, as Shane, a mysterious, gun-toting stranger who befriends homesteader Van Heflin and his wife, Jean Arthur, when cattle tycoon Emile Meyer is threatening to run them off their place."

The formation of Jaguar Productions demonstrated that Alan Ladd was an able businessman as well as a good actor. His independent outfit produced theatrical features and also lensed a few TV shows. In more recent years Alan is reputed to have made a film in Italy known as *ORAZIO* or *HORATIO*. He appeared on TV's *GENERAL ELECTRIC THEATRE* and produced his own radio show—*BOX 13*, which added to his many projects. His last movie, *THE CARPETBAGGERS*, a co-production between Paramount and Joseph E. Levine's Embassy Pictures, has been set for a summer '64 release. His unfortunate death at the comparatively young age of 50 last January 28th, sadly halted a new aspect of his career. As the character "Nevada Smith" in *THE CARPETBAGGERS*, Ladd turned in so exciting a dramatic performance that a sequel was being planned for him to star in.

Tough guy, actor and businessman—Alan Ladd combined all these roles into the picture of Hollywood success. It's hard to believe he's gone.



In *BEYOND GLORY* this Alan Ladd wartime episode emerged as part of a courtroom drama's search for testimony which would straighten out a military school misunderstanding.

ALAN LADD'S FEATURE FILM CREDITS

All the films listed below are Paramount pictures, except where noted otherwise. Names next to the titles are players who were starred, or co-starred with Ladd.

- 1939**
BEASTS OF BEELIN: (Producers Distributing Corp.) Released Drew
RULERS OF THE SEA: Douglas Fairbanks Jr.
- 1940**
LIGHT OF THE WESTERN STARS: Victor Jory
IN OLD MISSOURI: (Republic) Warner Bros.
MEET THE MONSIEUR: (Republic) Warner Bros.
CAPTAIN CAUTION: (United Artists)
Vivian Maude
HER FIRST ROMANCE: (Eight Men) (Mammoth) Edith Fellows
THOSE WERE THE DAYS: William Holden
- 1941**
PETTICOAT POLITICS: (Republic) Warner Bros.
THE BLACK CAT: (Universal) Basil Rathbone
THE BULLCAMP DRAGON: (RKO Radio) Donkey
Cartier Feature
PAPER BULLETS: (Gains Inc.): (RKO) Joan
Woodbury
- 1942**
JOHN OF PARIS: (RKO Radio) Michelle Morgan
THIS GUN FOR HIRE: Veronica Lake
THE GLASS KEY: Brian Donlevy
LUCKY JORDAN: Helen Walker
STAR SPANGLED BIRTHDAY: Betty Hutton
- 1943**
CHINA: Loneta Young

- 1944**
AND NOW TOMORROW: Loneta Young
- 1945**
DUFFY'S TAVERN: Ed Gander (All-Star production)
SALTY O'Rourke: Gail Russell
- 1946**
THE BLUE SAILHA: Veronica Lake
O.S.S.: Scudless Fitzgibbon
TWO YEARS BEFORE THE NASTY: Brian Donlevy
- 1947**
CALCUTTA: Gail Russell
VARIETY GIRL: Bleg Casby (All-Star production)
WILD HARVEST: Dorothy Lamour
- 1948**
SAYON: Veronica Lake
BEYOND GLORY: Duane Reed
WHISPERING SMITH: Robert Preston
- 1949**
THE GREAT GATSBY: Betty Field
CHICAGO DEADLINE: Duane Reed
- 1950**
CAPTAIN CARRY U.S.A.: Wendie Hendrix
- 1951**
APPOINTMENT WITH DANGER: Phyllis Colvert
BRANDED: Mass Ferguson
- 1952**
RED MOUNTAIN: Ulaeteth Scott
THE IRON MISTRESS: (Warner Bros.)
Virginia Mayo
- 1953**
THUNDER IN THE EAST: Deborah Kerr
SHANE: Van Heflin
ROYAL RAY: James Mason
DESERT LEGION: (Universal) Arlene Dahl

- 1954**
PARATROOPER: (Columbia) Lee Remick
HELL BELOW ZERO: (Columbia) Joan Tetzel
SASARATCHEWAN: (Universal) Shelley Winters
THE BLACK KNIGHT: (Columbia) Patricia Medina
DRUM BEAT: (Warner Bros.) Audrey Dalton
- 1955**
THE MCCONNELL STORY: (Warner Bros.)
Joan Allen
- 1956**
HELL ON FRISCO BAY: (Warner Bros.)
Edward G. Robinson
SANTIAGO: (Warner Bros.) Rosanna Podesta
- 1957**
THE BIG LAND: (Warner Bros.) Virginia Mayo
BOY ON A DOLPHIN: (20th Century-Fox)
Sophia Loren
- 1958**
THE DEEP SIX: (Warner Bros.) William Bendix
THE PROUD REBEL: (Buena Vista)
Olivia de Havilland
THE BADLANDERS: (MGMO) Ernest Borgnine
- 1959**
MAN IN THE NET: (United Artists) Carolyn Jones
GUNS OF THE TIMBERLAND: (Warner Bros.)
William Redford
- 1960**
ALL THE YOUNG MEN: (Columbia)
Innocent Johnson
ONE FOOT IN HELL: (20th Century-Fox)
Don Murray
- 1962**
13 WEST STREET: (Columbia) Debra Deen
- 1964**
THE CARPETBAGGERS: (Paramount-Embassy)
George Peppard

PRIMATE

screening

"Well, friends, the front office shars has me hoppin' this issue! Mind you now, Dr. Pa ain't complainin' anet! It's jus' that I can't help bein' a little bit proud of my latest accomplishment here at STI. I trust you'll all see my 'article' on page 48 het jure to make sure, I'm callin' yore attention to it right here and now. Gladden this ol' edger's heart and take a peek. Yes, the letters have been comin' in het 'n' heavy, resultin' in Pa's first major assignment! Keep readin' 'n' writin' and who knows what the future may hold?"

Send yore requests to: PA JECTOR, SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED, 1426 East Washington Lane, Philadelphia, Penna. 19138



PA JECTOR

Enjoyed the SPIDER pics in STI No. 8, Pa. Haw about a shot of Warren Hull as MANDRAKE, THE MAGICIAN?—Kathy Dempsey, Jackson, Mississippi. Na sooner said than done, kidda! In this gruelin' scene from Calumbio's 1939 serial, Ernie Adams draws serious glances from Mondrake and his faithful servont, Lothor, portrayed by Al Kikume.



I recently had the opportunity of seeing Denver Dixon's exciting production HALFWAY TO HELL. Can you tell me if he has any new releases on his schedule?—"Whitey" Robertson, Manrovia, California. The answer to that one is yes, and here is a scene taken on the set of the latest Victor Adamson Production, TWO TICKETS TO TERROR, a suspense melodrama being filmed in Technicolor's new Techniscope process. Director Al Adamson (r) puts actors John Aiman and Ray Marton through their poces.





Those dueling sequences from *THE ADVENTURES OF ROBIN HOOD* (STI No.7) were fantabulous! All I can say is more, more, more!—Tim Calf, Red Rock, Arkansas. Here's a highly interestin' one from Monogram's *BREED OF THE BORDER* (1933). The gent bein' pinned by Bob Steele is none other than the late Fred Cavens, Hollywood's master of fencin' who numbered Errol Flynn among his pupils. You, as well as onlookers George "Gobby" Hoyes and Morion Byron, can learn more about Fred by readin' our Zorro article in this ish.

Nothing satisfies my action appetite like "Mounted Police" pictures. Let's see Allan Lane again as *KING OF THE ROYAL MOUNTED*—Maynard Rocke, Kermit, Texas. While not from that particular Republic serial, this incident from its sequel, *KING OF THE MOUNTIES* (1942), should do. Anthony Warde dares to match brawn with Zane Grey's famous fictional hero.





BUCK JONES

Astride his great
horse, Silver, he
soared to the
very heights
of Western
Stardom!

**WESTERN
HALL OF FAME**

Feature by BOB PRICE

THE TRAGIC BLAZE that enveloped Boston's famous Coconut Grove night club on the evening of November 28, 1942, claimed over three hundred victims, including one of the world's most beloved Cowboy idols. It was ironic, indeed, that BUCK JONES, the splendid star of sagebrush epics, should die in surroundings so far removed from his beloved Western plains.

Buck was attending a party given in his honor by a group of New England film exhibitors on the night of the tragedy, when he was overcome by the flames which suddenly swept through the structure. His removal to the Massachusetts General Hospital was followed by death two days later on November 30.

Trem Carr, veteran Western producer and a close friend of Jones who had flown in from the coast upon hearing of the disaster, was told by doctors that Buck died as a result of "smoke inhalation, burned lungs, and from second and third degree burns of the face and neck." And that even had he survived, Buck's career would have been over "so grotesquely was he disfigured."

Narrowly escaping death in the same holocaust was producer-director Scott R. Dunlap, Jones' personal representative, who had accompanied the star on his trip East. They had been pals since Buck's early days in the film colony; a period that was preceded by some rather adventurous pre-Hollywood years.

his early years

Born in Vincennes, Indiana on Dec. 4, 1889, young Charles Gebhart grew up in the Southern Indiana farm country and it was during this period that he acquired his famous nickname. It happened one day, so the story goes, when "Chuck," as he was first known, was thrown from a cantankerous old mule. Circulation of the story brought gales of laughter to his neighbors and provided a new handle for him when "Chuck" became "Buck."

When he was twelve years old, his family pulled up stakes and headed for the Indian territory of Oklahoma to establish a "homestead." Locating near the town of Red Rock, they took 1350 acres and attempted to prove up the land. These early years on the Oklahoma frontier were hard for the Gebharts, though, and little spending money was seen by anyone, including teen-age Buck.

trails of adventure

So, Buck struck out on his own by getting a job on the famous Miller Bros. "101 Ranch." This was a gigantic spread located near the town of Bliss, Oklahoma, and consisting of 101,000 acres; hence the term "101"





Columbia releases served both to re-establish Buck Jones at the box-office and offer him financial security once again after his fiascos of 1928-29. Above as he appeared in **SUNDOWN RIDER** (1933) and below, throttling Harry Woods in the first Jones talkie, **THE LONE RIDER** (1930).



Ranch. The life of a working cowboy wrought many changes in Buck, and the 14-year-old farm boy who took the job at \$15 a month plus board, developed into a top \$30 a month hand by the time he was 17.

Many were the topics of conversation in ranch bunk houses during those days and one of the most fascinating to Buck was auto racing. He became so interested, in fact, that he suddenly decided to leave the 101 and head for Indianapolis, where races were held.

"It was a big decision in my life," Buck later recalled. "I was a green-horn through and through. I knew absolutely nothing about towns, much less cities. But the roving fever and my curiosity got the best of me. I decided at the age of seventeen that it was time I got out and saw a little of the world."

"I'll never forget how big and bustling and exciting Indianapolis looked to me. I couldn't get over the noise! After an entire lifetime in the silence of the outdoors, I couldn't believe that people could actually live in this clanking, confounded racket. I spent the first night at a hotel, but I couldn't sleep at all."

"The next day I made my way out to the race track. It was practically completed and already the famous race drivers from all over the country were gathered, testing the track and looking after their precious motors. No one paid much attention to me, except to stare at my cowboy's outfit as though I were a creature from another world."

"But one fellow, who appeared to be working as a mechanic, was very nice to me. His name was Harry Stillman, and he later became one of the most famous race drivers in the country. I told him I wanted to get into the racing racket in some way or another, and his first crack was: 'These are automobiles, son, not horses.' Even though I knew he was kidding me, we became fast friends."

Buck stayed at the Indianapolis track for a year working as a mechanic before he enlisted in the Army where, as a member of the 6th Cavalry, he saw service in the Philippines against the Moros.

'big time' or bust

The 101 Ranch beckoned once more following his Army discharge, but after the exciting events experienced by Buck during the previous years, life on the range seemed rather tame. So it was with great enthusiasm that he heard the news that the ranch was going to send a "Wild West" show out on the road. Signing on for exhibitions of bronc riding and trick roping, Buck traveled with the MILLER BROTHERS 101 RANCH WILD WEST SHOW to New York, where the troupe played their first important date.



Prominent in many of Buck's early Columbia talkies was young Word Bond, here getting on unexpected heave-ho from **THE FIGHTING RANGER** (1934). Completing this foursome is Frank Rice & Dorothy Revier.

It was also in New York, this spring of 1914 at Madison Square Garden, that Buck played his "first important date." For it was here that he first met Odelle Osborne, a circus rider from Philadelphia, who soon became Mrs. Jones.

"We got married in Lima, Ohio," according to Buck, "a year after we had met, on horseback in the center of the circus ring with half the town applauding us and the other half scandalized. But we didn't care. We were in love, and we wanted to do what we loved best, ride."

Hearing that there was big money to be had in Chicago "breaking horses" being purchased for the French Cavalry, Buck and "Dell" headed there where they managed to accumulate quite a "roll." This was used to finance their own small, riding exhibition circus which proved to be a profitable idea as they toured the tank towns of the Dakotas and Montana.

Buck's movie debut

The "big time" then beckoned when Buck received an offer from the Ringling Brothers Circus. Accepting, he and Dell travelled with the show to California where they were forced to leave late in 1917 because she was expecting a baby. Settling in

Los Angeles, Buck was looking for some steady employment when a chance meeting with an old circus pal, who was working "extra" in westerns being filmed at Universal, led him to his first encounter with the cameras. There, on the old Universal City lot, Buck made his motion picture debut as a "shepherd-er," for the magnificent sum of five dollars a day.

The money from these first movie jobs enabled the Joneses to establish a home in the film capital where their daughter, Maxine, was born. Buck always had the interests of his family at heart and it was with great pride that he later saw Maxine married to Noah Beery, Jr.

Eventually Buck graduated from extra work to featured parts in films such as the 2-reelers made by Franklyn Farnum for Canyon Pictures (BROTHER BILL, UPHILL CLIMB and DESERT RAT) and later to the higher salaried position of stuntman, where his range-riding background proved a boon. So expert did he become at this phase of movie-making, that he was soon offered a \$40-a-week contract as permanent year-round stuntman for the Fox Studios.

Fox executives were at that time having plenty of troubles with their chief bread-winner, Tom Mix. Tom was insisting upon more money and threatened to stop making pictures

unless he got it. So, as a sort of threat to him, Fox decided to build up another Western star to scare Mix into line. Buck was selected, receiving a salary increase to \$150 per week, and was put to work in his first starrer, **THE LAST STRAW**.

long parade of hits

This was early in 1920. **THE LAST STRAW** proved an immediate hit and "Buck Jones," the embryo cowboy star, drew enthusiastic praise from critics and moviegoers everywhere. For example, *Wid's Daily*, a trade paper of the era, had this to say: "William Fox has become his own competitor and introduced a second cowboy star in the person of Buck Jones, who makes his initial bow to stardom. . . . Jones has personality just a little different than most of the Western heroes we have had so far. There is a certain sincerity of purpose about his portrayal that is sure to please. . . . Taking all in all, it must be conceded that the latest cowboy hero will probably meet with the approval of the picture-loving public, more especially those admirers of Western photoplays."

Truer comments were never printed and these proved to be some of the understatements of the day; for Buck plunged into one of Hollywood's

Two veteran Westerners and one veteran comic. Charles King, Buck and Honk Monn waiting for some plot developments along the **DAWN TRAIL**, a 1931 Beverly Pictures Production released by Columbia.



most amazing film careers. Following **THE LAST STRAW** he starred in scores of silent programmers for Fox including in 1920: **FORBIDDEN TRAILS**, **FIREBRAND**, **TREVISION**, **THE SQUARE SHOOTER**, **SUNSET SPRAGUE**, **JUST PAIS**.

1921: **TWO MOONS**, **THE BIG PUNCH**, **THE ONE-MAN TRAIL**, **GET YOUR MAN**, **STRAIGHT FROM THE SHOULDER**, **BAR NOTHIN'**, **RIDING WITH DEATH**.

1922: **WESTERN SPEED**, **TO A FINISH**, **ROUGHSHOD**, **THE PAST MAIL**, **TROOPER O'NEIL**, **WEST OF CHICAGO**, **BELLS OF SAN JUAN**, **BOSS OF CAMP FOUR**.

1923: **THE FOOTLIGHT RANGER**, **SNOWDRIFT**, **HELL'S HOLE**, **ELEVENTH HOUR**, **SKID PROOF**, **SECOND HAND LOVE**, **BIG DAN**, **CUPID'S FIREMAN**.

1924: **NOT A DRUM WAS HEARD**, **THE VAGABOND TRAIL**, **THE ARIZONA EXPRESS**, **THE CIRCUS COWBOY**, **WESTERN LUCK**, **AGAINST ALL ODDS**, **THE DESERT OUTLAW**, **WINNER TAKE ALL**, **THE MAN WHO PLAYED SQUARE**.

1925: **THE ARIZONA ROMEO**, **THE TRAIL RIDER**, **GOLD AND THE GIRL**, **THE TIMBER WOLF**, **DURAND OF THE BADLANDS**, **LAZY-BONES**, **THE DESERT'S PRICE**.

1926: **THE COWBOY AND THE COUNTESS**, **THE FIGHTING BUCKAROO**, **A MAN FOUR-SQUARE**, **THE GENTLE CYCLONE**, **THE FLYING HORSEMAN**, **30 BELOW ZERO**.

1927: **DESERT VALLEY**, **THE WAR HORSE**, **WHISPERING SAGE**, **HILLS OF PERIL**, **GOOD AS GOLD**, **CHAIN LIGHTNING**, **BLACKJACK**, **SILVER VALLEY**, **BLOOD WILL TELL** and, in 1928, **THE BRANDED SOMBERO**.

It was at Fox that Buck formed his close association with "Scotty" Dunlap, who directed some of these early treasures. In the eight years he starred for Fox, Buck became that company's second largest money-earner and was reputedly earning \$3500 per week in the later years of his contract. Such affluence was, perhaps, Buck's temporary downfall, for this accumulation of capital prompted him to sever relations with Fox and embark on two financially disastrous ventures of his own.

'Big Hop' flops

Earliest of these was his initial attempt at independent film-making in 1928. The first of his "Buck Jones Productions," **THE BIG HOP**, received bad reviews, proved a box-office failure and ultimately resulted in a loss of some \$50,000 for Buck.

The novelty of sound was just coming to the fore at the time of **THE BIG HOP**'s release and, while actually a silent picture with titles, it was issued with "Synchronized Music and Sound Effects," using the Cortella Phone disc system. Placed into "States Rights" distribution channels, the film did not get the circulation it might have had, if



Buck Jones' authentic range background was reflected in his realistic screen characterizations. As opposed to many film stars, there was no need to pretend to be a cowboy; for he was the genuine article, and it showed!

properly handled by a major company. Also, this story of a Western rancher who enters a Trans-Pacific flying contest was not popular with Buck's fans, who seemed to prefer horses over horsepower in their hero's pics.

fiasco number two

Buck's second catastrophe occurred when he put together his **BUCK JONES WILD WEST SHOW**. A few years previously, a group of youthful admirers known as "The Buck Jones Rangers" had been organized, chiefly as a promotional stunt; an idea that had mushroomed to the point where

earned for producer Sol Lesser's Beverly Pictures. There was a big difference between this pact and the one he had with Fox, however, for Buck's salary was now \$300 per week.

Released by Columbia, the first of this series was **THE LONE RIDER** in July 1930. Buck's first talkie, enthusiastically received and acclaimed "one of the best talking Westerns of the season," Jones followed with other topnotch action efforts: **SHADOW RANCH**, **MEN WITHOUT LAW**, **THE DAWN TRAIL**, **DESERT VENGEANCE**, **THE AVENGER**, **THE TEXAS RANGER** and **THE FIGHTING SHERIFF** for the 1930-31 season.

Columbia then took over the actual production of the Jones pictures and

very active hand in this operation and, in addition to his starring and front office activities, performed such behind-the-camera functions as script writer and, on occasion, director. These titles made available to exhibitors from 1934-37 were: **ROCKY RHODES**, **WHEN A MAN SEES RED**, **THE CRIMSON TRAIL**, **STONE OF SILVER CREEK**, **BORDER BRIGANDS**, **OUTLAWED GUNS**, **THE THROWBACK**, **THE IVORY HANDLED GUN**, **SUNSET OF POWER**, **SILVER SPURS**, **FOR THE SERVICE**, **THE COWBOY AND THE KID**, **RIDE 'EM COWBOY**, **BOSS RIDER OF GUN CREEK**, **EMPTY SADDLES**, **SAND FLOW**, **LEFT-HANDED LAW**, **SMOKE TREE**



Like Hoot Gibson, Buck loved to inject humor into his Westerns whenever possible; as in this scene where he and the boys attempt to teach Silver the "Charleston!"

the club once boasted over 4,000,000 members. Buck had always wanted to return to the world of outdoor show business, and what better idea was there than to bring his own Wild West Show to towns sporting large concentrations of "Rangers"?

It was a sound idea alright, but Buck had not reckoned with a few unscrupulous tricks sometimes practiced in the circus world. After the posting of show bills or "paper" by his "advance man," rival shows would either destroy or cover up these notices so that by the time the **BUCK JONES WILD WEST SHOW** arrived in a given town, hardly anyone knew they were there! At the end of thirty days on the road the show folded, leaving Buck sad and disheartened and \$300,000 poorer.

In desperate straits, financially, Buck returned to the coast where eventually Damp, now his manager, was able to arrange a contract for Buck to make a series of eight West-

erns from late '31 through early '34 released the following titles: **BRANDED**, **BORDER LAW**, **RANGE FEUD**, **RIDIN' FOR JUSTICE**, **THE DEADLINE**, **ONE MAN LAW**, **SOUTH OF THE RIO GRANDE**, **WHITE EAGLE**, **HELLO TROUBLE**, **McKENNA OF THE MOUNTED**, **FORBIDDEN TRAIL**, **TREASON**, **SUNDOWN RIDER**, **CALIFORNIA TRAIL**, **UNKNOWN VALLEY**, **THRILL HUNTER**, **THE FIGHTING CODE**, **THE FIGHTING RANGER** and **MAN TRAILER**. In addition, Buck appeared in two non-Western dramas for the company: **HIGH SPEED** (1932), an auto racing thriller, and **CHILD OF MANTHAN** (1933), with Nancy Carroll.

multi-talented Buck

Leaving Columbia, he re-activated his Buck Jones Corporation and produced a series of 22 action dramas for Universal release. Buck had a

RANGE, **BLACK ACES**, **LAW FOR TOMBSTONE**, **BOSS OF LONELY VALLEY** and **SUDDEN BILL DORN**.

A dispute with Universal in mid-1937 (the studio wanted him to increase his yearly output) resulted in a transfer of Buck's activities to Columbia for whom he provided six starters in 1937-38. These Coronet Pictures were **HOLLYWOOD ROUND-UP**, **HEADIN' EAST**, **CALIFORNIA FRONTIER**, **OVERLAND EXPRESS**, **STRANGER FROM ARIZONA** and **LAW OF THE TEXAN**. In keeping with trends of the times, Buck's place on Universal's production schedule was then filled by a singing cowboy, Bob Baker.

Old school cowboys were naturally bitter about the musical intrusion and Buck was no exception. "They use songs to save money on horses, riders and ammunition," he was quoted. "Why, you take Gene Autry and lean him up against a tree with his guitar and let him sing three

songs and you can fill up a whole reel without spending any money. That's why they're overdone the singing, and that's why it's on the way out."

Buck as a crook?

Buck predicted the death of the musical Western fad alright, but many years were to pass before it came about; too many years to do his career any good. No regular series of pictures was to come his way in the next couple of years and instead Buck appeared in two very non-Jones-type of roles. The first was UNMARRIED, a 1939 Paramount picture in which he played a broken-down prize fighter, and the other was WAGONS WESTWARD (1940). His role of a crooked sheriff in this Chester Morris starrer for Republic brought shrieks of anger from the Jones gallery. *How could they do this to Buck?*

Jones then made two more serials in 1941, WHITE EAGLE (Columbia) and RIDERS OF DEATH VALLEY (Universal), increasing his chapter-play total to six, for he had previously made four for Universal: GORDON OF GHOST CITY (1933), THE RED RIDER (1934), ROARING WEST (1935) and THE PHANTOM RIDER (1936).

the Rough Riders ride

With Jones' star very much on the descent, Scott Dunlap came to the rescue with a Monogram pact in 1941. This united Buck with old-timers Tim McCoy and Raymond Hatton in that studio's "Rough Riders" series. These eight sagebrushers, ARIZONA BOUND, GUNMAN FROM BODIE, FORBIDDEN TRAILS, BELOW THE BORDER, GHOST TOWN LAW, DOWN TEXAS WAY, RIDERS OF THE WEST and WEST OF THE LAW were well made but these elder statesmen of the sage were facing ever-increasing competition from the younger stars and musical formats of the day.

Buck was then to make only one more film. This was DAWN ON THE GREAT DIVIDE, a sort of Monogram "special" with Mona Barrie, Rex Bell and Raymond Hatton, which was released shortly after his death.

Buck crammed a rich, full life into his 53 years, doing the things he loved to do most. He was completely dedicated to frontier film-making and would quickly come to the defense of his art.


"Drop around to a neighborhood theatre some Saturday afternoon," he'd say, "then you'll see why Westerns are going to be here for a very long time to come, and why your old pal Buck is going to keep on making them as long as he can climb into the saddle."

Which is exactly what he did. ●



Fred Kahler, one of the BORDER BRIGANDS, feels the wrath of Buck Jones, an undercover Canadian Mauntie, in Universal's 1935 release. Below, the avenger bit in SUNSET OF POWER, also '35 Universal.





FLYING AND FIGHTING HEROES

Striking out at all who would oppose justice and fair play, these amazing defenders of the right have become the favorites of millions both young and old.



John Hart, star of Columbia's 1955 ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN AFRICA, proves how gaad on octar he is by keeping a straight face with a ridiculous looking ape-suited performer standing right in front of him. Hart's skill was also in effect quite recently as a featured star on ABC-TV's DAY IN COURT.

MORE IMAGINATIONS have been captured by colorfully costumed, fictional thrill-makers than perhaps by any other type of screen adventure hero. Well known film action stars (ie. John Wayne) also play in comedies and dramatic productions, which certainly expand their general popularity, but at the same time dilute their specialization in this one area. This is a good thing for actors, as they do not become type cast and so may perform in a wide variety of motion picture categories. On the other hand, some members of the audience will for this reason not be able to identify with these stars on a purely action-

adventure basis. All this points directly to the fact that *Superman*, *Flash Gordon*, *The Phantom* and their kind always deliver the sock-a-minute excitement that fans of this type of entertainment demand. In comic strips, movies, radio shows and on TV these fearless crusaders have never let their legions of admirers down.

King of Comics

In over 25 years of active competition Superman has proven the most durable of them all. Undefeated king of comic book adventure, he

rated tops in animated cartoons, live action serials and more recently as the star of over 100 ¼ hour television episodes. *The Man of Steel* has indeed proven his strength in a business sense too. All later adventure heroes, which were patterned after him, have either been generally forgotten or survive to such a lesser degree that their existence is hardly noticeable.

Surveying the adventure scene on a purely personality basis, many names come forth of popular screen stars. Those enjoying the heroics presented by films of this type will no doubt like to some extent, just about all the actors who have been



Proving himself in a great test of strength, Gordon Scott tries to prevent his being choked by Anthony Quoy's wire noose in **TARZAN'S GREATEST ADVENTURE**.



Showing how Superman has to "pull his punches" when slugging the heavies, are these two scenes of the Man of Steel in action. Above: Columbia's Clark Kent (Kirk Alyn) shows how it's done. Below: A demonstration from the TV series with George Reeves.

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responsible for popularizing their favorite type of socko celluloid. However, when true fans of serial thrills get together to discuss the who's who and what's what of actiondom, one name usually stands out head and shoulders above all the rest. To state this situation in a simple manner, the man's name is of course **Buster Crabbe!**

Countless fans

Countless so-called actors have appeared and disappeared on TV and in the movies—they usually don't leave a strong mental impression in the minds of their audience. The ones who are remembered fondly, and thought about to some great extent, are those who can impress both children and adults with their distinctive personalities and versatile dramatic abilities. Buster Crabbe rates right at the top of this theatrical list. Those who saw him originally in his serials of the 1930's remain his staunch boosters to this day, as do film fans of the 40's, 50's and 60's who have been enjoying his early productions (in re-release and on TV) and new films with equal enthusiasm.

Cliffhanger Champ

Buster Crabbe clearly rates as Hollywood's *King of the Sound Serial*, having a total of nine starring cliffhanger classics to his credit. So popular are these films that it would be difficult for many fans to accept any other actor in the roles of these fictional heroes. Buster's serial triumphs are: **TARZAN THE FEARLESS** (Principal 1933), **FLASH GORDON** (Universal 1936), **RED BARRY** (Universal 1938), **FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS** (Universal 1938), **BUCK ROGERS** (Universal 1939), **FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE** (Universal 1940), **THE SEA HOUND** (Columbia 1947), **PIRATES OF THE HIGH SEAS** (Columbia 1950) and **KING OF THE CONGO** (Columbia 1952). In the mid-1950's adventure conditioned TV audiences, who had been thrilled to the core by Buster's Universal serials, wanted more and more action from their favorite star. This request came through in the form of **CAPTAIN GALLANT**, the popular TV series which Buster Crabbe stars in, and is still running strong throughout the world. Dealing with the adventures of the French Foreign Legion, it presents



Dr. Zarkov (Frank Shannon), Flash (Buster Crabbe) and Dale Arden (Jean Rogers) are surprised to meet metal-clad Earl Askam in Universal's 1936 FLASH GORDON.

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BLACKHAWK star Kirk Alyn is held at bay by Carol Farman in the 1952 Columbia serial.

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Charles "Ming the Merciless" Middleton prepares another sinister situation in **FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE** (Universal 1940).

Irving Pichel has his henchman prepare a death trap in **DICK TRACY'S G-MEN** that is worthy of some of the best inventiveness seen in sound serials. Here Ralph Byrd is only momentarily helpless in this scene from the 1939 Republic cliffhanger.



the versatile actor in tense dramatic situations as well as fast action.

At the present time, Buster's business schedule has become so demanding that he has difficulty finding the time to appear in new films. As *Executive Director* of a swimming pool construction firm, he has guided Cascade Industries to a leading position in that field. Another line of endeavor, summer camps, has also been greatly enhanced by Buster Crabbe's presence. His Camp Meenahga in Saranac Lake, New York is for boys and his Camp Hui Kai in Marblehead, Massachusetts is a co-educational recreation spot for teenagers. Both are filled to capacity each season and it's no wonder—What young boy or teenager wouldn't just love to spend his vacation season at the camp of his favorite adventure star? There are certainly a few older boys around who wish they could shed a few years for this opportunity.

Meet Buster Crabbe!

When time does permit, Buster manages to get out to Hollywood to star in an occasional Western for producer Edward Small. A new one is on the way shortly. Currently under negotiation is a project for Buster Crabbe to star in an exciting underwater spectacular at the World's Fair in New York City. If it goes through as planned, it will provide an opportunity for millions of movie and TV fans to see their favorite star *in person!*

Serials being shown

For those who have not recently seen the many screen heroics of Buster Crabbe and other fabulous cliffhanger adventurers here is great information. Currently Buster's *Flash Gordon* and *Buck Rogers* serials are making the TV rounds, as is a feature version of his *TARZAN THE FEARLESS*. 16mm rental libraries throughout the U.S. have available for rental *ADVENTURES OF CAPTAIN MARVEL*, *THE SPIDER WEB*, *THE SPIDER RETURNS*, Buster Crabbe's Columbia serials and lots more along these lines. Fortunate movie fans can also catch the two *Batman* serials, *Captain Marvel* and others at neighborhood picture palaces. Providing thrills for adventure lovers of all ages, these amazing heroes zoom into action once again.

END



Buster Crabbe, the king of them all, as he thrilled untold millions in 1940's **FLASH GORDON CONQUERS THE UNIVERSE**.

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AMERICA'S OLDEST SCREEN SPELLBINDER



An Exclusive Report
**SCREEN THRILLS
ILLUSTRATED**
Interview & Story by Sam Sherman

'Silent Bill' Haddock, this country's oldest living film director, brought drama, action, thrills and excitement to his pioneer motion pictures.

TODAY'S PRODUCERS and directors are fortunate indeed that motion pictures are an already-developed medium. The grouping and searching for formats, formulas and basic rules is over. In short—just about everything that appears today in motion pictures and filmed TV shows, has been done before. As a matter of fact, the movies' pre-1915 period boasted: talking pictures, productions in color, gigantic historical spectacles, daring "sin & passion" exploitation films and, for more that's considered today to be very modern!

When yesterday's director thought he'd try out a new idea, you can bet it was new then! The untold was always the rule of the day and only those with the will to experiment against all kinds of overwhelming odds succeeded. One such man was and is William "Silent Bill"

one in the days when films were just used to supplement stage performances.

The year was 1905 and the master theatrical showman Charles Froman had just decided to try his hand at Vaudeville (his only attempt), in the form of an act brought over from England. As part of the show, a film was used to depict a train entering and leaving a station. William Haddock's work with this act was his first connection with the movies. Things moved fast in those years and someone who had a theatrical background and some film experience was much sought after by the screen producers of that day. In this manner "Silent Bill" went to work for the Kamephone Company in the summer of 1907. He directed and acted in their films, which were the first American talking pictures!

Kamephone's method of production involved the actors' recording of specially synchronized records, which they later pantomimed to as the cameras recorded the action. This is much the same method which is used today for singers on TV and in the movies, who only move their lips to a vocal rendition of a song previously recorded. Contrary to misinformation handed down through the years, Kamephone and their process proved a success. However, the firm met an early demise due to hurried over expansion and poor management.



Wm. "Silent Bill" Haddock (1910)

Haddock. He was born on November 27, 1877 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and came from a family which traces its way back to their original arrival on American soil in 1610. Getting a solid educational background at Boston's English High School and Burdette College, he decided that the theatrical world was for him. The step from the theatre to the movies was a quick

After a brief return to the stage, William Haddock found himself back in the silent movies (December 1908) as a performer for the Edison Co. in films made in Newport, Rhode Island. Quick to catch on to the director's natural abilities, the Edison outfit called him to Orange, New Jersey to direct two one-reel films (the standard of that day for a complete picture—approx. 1000' of 35mm film or approx. 10-15 mins. in length). Arriving on location, Bill was amazed to learn that there was no written script or story synopsis for the films he was to make. He was just told a sketchy outline of the plots and that was it! His own ability was all he could count on from that point.

In February 1910 Bill Haddock went to work for Carl Laemmle, who later founded Universal Pictures. His firm at the time was known as IMP (Independent Moving Picture Co.) and Bill was the third director Laemmle had hired since he entered the business. He directed over 25 films for IMP and left when C.L.'s extremely tight budgets could no longer squeeze out even a watered down performance from a stenciled actor. Laemmle was reputed to have allocated \$3000 for himself weekly due to the strong rein he had on production finances.

Conditions being what they were at IMP, Bill Haddock signed with the French producer Gaston Mèlies

A young J. Farrell MacDonald surrenders to Joe Smiley as Teresa Toube looks on in 1911 IMP drama directed by Bill for Carl Laemmle.



A rare shot from the "first" BIRTH OF A NATION—1911's THE CLANSMAN, a Haddock production filmed in "Kinemacolor"!

to make Westerns in San Antonio, Texas. Two of the leading players who were brought along to appear in these outdoor productions were Francis Ford and Edith Story. Ford, the brother of now-famed director John Ford, was given his start in the picture business by Bill, who hired him in 1909 to work for the Edison Studio on 21st street in New York City. Quite by accident, both men were hired by Melies in 1910 without one another knowing in advance that they would toil together again. In later years Francis Ford became a well known leading man, adventure star, director and character actor—he appeared in his brother's films too, i.e. **STAGE-COACH**.

However, back in 1910-1911 he was a Melies performer and he proved an able one-reel Western star in many Haddock productions. "Silent Bill" turned out about 60

films for Melies-Star, one of the most outstanding of which was 1911's **THE IMMORTAL ALAMO**. This early epic is reputed to be the first screen treatment of the mighty Texas battle. The film was made in San Antonio and a front wall, simulating the Alamo, was built for it. The armies of Texas and Mexico were played by 300 cadets from the Southwestern Military Academy.

impossible to shoot

In October 1911 William Haddock became part of a project whose very existence has been forgotten, even though it greatly concerns serious film history. He directed the original **BIRTH OF A NATION!** A film which never saw completion and so was never distributed. Working for the Kinemacolor Co., a firm

which was one of the earliest producers of Color motion pictures, Bill Haddock was chosen to direct the screen production of **THE CLANSMAN**. Prepared as a full length feature film (not a one or two reeler) this production would have been one of the first such long films produced in America—the only problem was the senseless method that Kinemacolor was forcing "Silent Bill" to use in making the picture. He and the film crew were to travel with the road company that was giving stage performances of **THE CLANSMAN**, which was based on Thomas Dixon's famed novel. They were to shoot scenes for the film day by day in different cities. This absurd method angered Bill who knew the backgrounds would never match; and that scheduling the filming and setups would be near impossible. Nevertheless, he did direct quite a bit of the film

Dustin Farnum (wearing dark tie & laced boots) in his "first" picture—William Haddock's action loaded 1913 production of **SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE**.



until he finally broke off with Kine-macolor and sued them for his salary—which he never collected!

Frank Woods, editor of Motion Picture News, had seen some of the Haddock-Clansman footage and thought it so interesting, that he told D. W. Griffith about it and suggested Griffith make a film based on the Dixon novel. This was the birth of BIRTH OF A NATION! D. W. went into production on the epic-classic and in 1915 a movie masterpiece emerged.

pull that punch!

In 1912 William Haddock joined Eclair and turned out scores of adventure films, comedies and dramas in their Fort Lee, New Jersey studios and in Pawnee, Oklahoma. He brought Robert Frazer into the movies for that firm and guided the

actor's early screen career. (When sound came in Frazer became one of the busiest character actors around.) Star-to-be Evelyn Brent also played her first small roles in these very same pictures. George Larkin, a stuntman who had doubled Pearl White, came to prominence as the star of Bill's Pawnee, Oklahoma oaters. George was only 5' 6", but his background as an prizefighter made him one of film-dom's tougher performers. The fights he staged, in those pre-camera-tricked-punch days were fierce filmic brawls. On some occasions Larkin and a tough cowpuncher named "Whitey" would fight before the cameras almost endlessly until director Bill blew a whistle, giving the signal for George to give his adversary the knockout punch and end the battle royal.

With the arrival of 1913, Dustin Farnum became a stage actor turn-

ed movie star. The film was SOLDIERS OF FORTUNE, an adventure-loaded picture which was directed by William Haddock on location in Cuba. Noted as Dustin's first film, his next film that year (1913) THE SQUAW MAN was to prove a source for much early Cecil B. DeMille publicity. Bill Haddock was offered a contract to direct THE SQUAW MAN by the Jesse Lasky Company, which consisted of Lasky, DeMille and Sam Goldfish (before he changed his name to Goldwyn). "Silent Bill" was to get \$300 per week plus a stock interest in the company—however, he received a better offer elsewhere and so didn't do THE SQUAW MAN. The man who *did* direct that particular film was Oscar Apfel, although DeMille has been *mis-credited* as being its director. Apfel's name was never mentioned in publicity on THE SQUAW MAN—the De-

Villain Henry Pemberton throws chauffeur out of car as he prepares to make his getaway. This scene is from TRADE SECRET, o Haddock directed serial-like film. (Gotham 1914)





Hera Robert Frazer holds back mab in 1913 Eclair production filmed in Fart Lee, New Jersey. Bar-tender Jack Johnson and others dangerously used real clubs and bottles in this fight as "breakaway" praps were accidentally switched for real ones.

Mille name always getting the big play. Another area of controversy surrounding this picture is its reputation as the first feature made in Hollywood—claims have been made of others that were earlier.

serial thrills

As the months reeled by William Haddock turned out an endless variety of screenfare for an assortment of production outfits: Kalem, All Star Co., Life Photo Co. and Holland Film Co. In 1915 he joined Gaumont and worked on films in Flushing, New York and Jacksonville, Florida. That year he did one of W. C. Fields' first films at the Flushing studio. Fields did his pool table act in the short and didn't help production schedules any when he and some pals went out for lunchtime drinks and returned driving a "lifted" garbage wagon. But, a clever director like Bill Haddock knew how to work with people and so the film turned out okay despite the difficulties encountered.

With the increasing popularity of

serials in the late teens, more and more producers got into the field of chapter play production. Top directors were hired to do these films and so William Haddock teamed with Burton King to bring to life two cliffhanger classics. **THE MASTER MYSTERY** starring Houdini and **THE CARTER CASE** starring Herbert Rawlinson (1918-19 releases) were the products of their collaboration. Both were 15 episode serials and were filmed one chapter per week. The early chapters were released after they were finished and in some locations they played before the final chapters were even completed. Houdini had developed a special diving suit which permitted the man inside it to get out without help and while still underwater. Houdini used this in **THE MASTER MYSTERY** in scenes which were filmed in a special glass tank to make camerawork easy. In that very same film the mystery man villain was played by Floyd Buckley who wore a special metal suit which looked like a cross between a suit of armor and a robot, and which was really made out of heavy

metal. Playing the part himself, without a double, Buckley was supposed to crawl up a steep cliff out of a boat in the water at City Island, New York. A hazardous sequence in the heavy outfit, the actor ran into trouble as it was being filmed. Bill Haddock and the crew were pretty far away from him as he crawled up the cliff. However, all did not run smoothly! Suddenly, he started slipping back towards the water as he lost his footing. But, luck was there that day and he regained his hold on the rocks. According to Bill: "If he had slipped into the water with that heavy suit on, we never would have been able to save him." Making serials was for the tough only!

limitless talent

With a theatrical acting background in his blood, Bill Haddock was always looking for new and exciting projects. After working with Sidney Olcott on **REBECCA OF SUNNYBROOK FARM**, **TIMOTHY-QUEST** and finally **LITTLE OLD NEW YORK** in 1923, he left



Bob Fraser blasts into action as he heaves villain at baddies in another shot from the famed 1913 Eclair fight sequence. Unconscious heroine Mildred Bright (who later became Fraser's wife) was almost hit by a flying plate in this battle.

motion pictures to devote his time to other fields. The last films he directed were made in 1927: a real life series about towns in the eastern U.S. In 1930 he managed a children's theatre that figured quite prominently in the careers of many young future stars. John Garfield was one of them.

Returning to acting Bill became much in demand on the stage. In 1946 he toured the Far East in **YOU CAN'T TAKE IT WITH YOU**, playing one of the leading roles. When television drama became the rage he adapted to this too. **MR. PEPPERS** and **SEARCH FOR TOMORROW** are just two of the countless New York based TV shows that he appeared on. Recently he was in the film versions of **THE MIRACLE WORKER** and **SUNRISE AT CAMPOBELLO**, and last fall Bill was flown to California, where he was featured with Laurence Harvey in the stage production **THE TIME OF THE BARACUDA**. The play is due for a Broadway run next fall, and "Silent Bill" will be sure to be in it. This unique director and actor, who will

be 87 on his next birthday, remembers fondly the early movies.

"I would never tell an actor to do something I wouldn't do myself. While making a series of comedies in 1909, one of our actors was supposed to be hit by a steamroller in one scene. He backed out of it, so I "doubled" for him myself and took the fall. Working on railroad pictures sometimes proved very dangerous. While doing one of these films, the engineer didn't follow the instructions he had been given in advance. The hero was tied to the tracks and the girl was to untie him as the train came along. The engine was to move slowly and we would undercrank, so that the camera would speed up the action. This is not what happened though. The train came down the tracks at full speed and our heroine almost missed getting the hero untied in time.

Quiet!

Everybody always wonders why I'm called "Silent Bill." I was a member of the gang at the first mo-

tion picture club. When I would enter I always shouted out a greeting. They began to call me "Noisy Bill," to which I replied that I'm the quietest member of the Screen Club. The press started to call me "Noisy Bill" for a gag, but I had it switched to "Silent Bill," which stuck."

Asked to sum up his outlook on his motion picture career, "Silent Bill" replied:

"The pioneering days were probably the most satisfying and happiest of a motion picture director's life, in spite of the fact that he had no assistant, had to write his own continuity, or shoot off the cuff, look up locations, make up his own prop list and sometimes act in the pictures. Whatever the result was, credit or blame was his."

In the case of William "Silent Bill" Haddock, the credit was and is his. A fine director, performer & gentleman, this screen veteran has given a lot to the art and entertainment of motion pictures. We at **SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED** take off our editorial hats to an amazing individual.

Here they
are! The
bone-breakin',
jaw-knockin',
rib crackin'
gang that
made Holly-
wood the
action capital
of the world!...

THE SMASHING STUNT MEN



AN STI
SPECIAL FEATURE
BY PA JECTOR

PA JECTOR, AUTHOR! Doesn't that grab you?
Don't it look grand? Ol' Pa shone is mighty pless-
ed! Yessir, STI publisher Warren thinks my work
on **PRIVATE SCREENIN'** has progressed to the
point where I deserve the chance to do a whole article!
I'll nevah forget the day Big Jim came down to
the film vault and handed me my assignment. I'd
just finished researchin' the stills for this issue and

was screenin' an original silent negative lookin' for
splices, when someone tapped me on the shoulder
and woke me up.

The first thing across the sound drum was, "*Sleepin'
on the job, eh!*"

Now this was a right embarrassin' spot for Ol' Pa
to be in. After all, I ain't as spry as I used to was and
good positions, even this damp job in the vault, ain't



Durin' the days when I was roadshavin' up in the Yukon, I shore had some jim-dandy turnouts. I'll nevah forget ih' time 500 action-hungry gold praspersctors turned up at our little 200-seat "Music Hall" ta see Freddie Barthalamew in LITTLE LORD FAUNTLEROY. Boy, what a rhubarb! And this scene fram GUNS OF THE TIMBERLAND shore does laak like that Saturday night!

always so easy to come by for us old film folk! And this was the *Big Boss*, himself!

All I could think of at the time was to tell the truth which was, namely, that I wasn't sleepin'; merely restin' my tired ol' bloodshot eyes after a hard day at the Simplex (that's Ol' Betsy, my little ol' projectin' machine, bless her heart!).

the big assignment

I should have known he was just funnin' though, for JW's just a big kiddier. So, after our initial greetin's and an exchange of pleasantries

typical of us folks in show biz (Did you hear the one about . . . ?), Big Jim handed me a batch of stills.

I took one look at 'em and, believe you me, Ol' Pa ain't felt so bad since the last time he watched Betsy King Ross in *THE PHANTOM EMPIRE*!

"Pa," Jim grinned, "I'm givin' you your big break! You've been slavin' away down here, nursin' your lumbago, all for the good of the Warren Empire and what have you got to show for it? Pulled sprockets, that's what! But that's all past now, for I'm kickin' myself upstairs and takin' you with me. I'll make it all up to you, Pa, and the first thing I'm

goin' to do is let you write a story to go along with these great stills!"

He was bein' too good to me. My take-up reel spilleth over.

passin' the buck

"I'm itchin' to do it myself," he continued (next week). "These stills have the makin's of a great article and the only reason I'm not doin' it myself, is that I'm goin' to be socked in over the weekend."

Maybe I should take another look at those stills, I thought. Maybe I'd misjudged them. Maybe they were great. So, Ol' Pa took another peek.

It was soon very evident that Pa, the would-be author, was forgettin' a rule learned by Pa, the projectionist, many reels before. Namely, *nevah screen a bad film twice!*

a knotty problem

What could I do with this mess of unrelated scenes? How could I possibly tie them together? In a bundle, yes, but in an *article*?

At times like that I almost wish that STT's Jim Warren was RKO's Western star Jim Warren!

JW booked, pardon, brooked no interference with his plans, however, and sensing my quandry, countered with: "If you don't want to do it, Pa, just say so, and I'll give it to Cliff Hanger to do. He's continued to hang around week after week just beggin' me for a chance at stardom. I don't want to have to do it, though, because I've always had a soft spot in my head, I mean heart, for you, Pa. You see, you remind me of my favorite movie actor, Leo Gorcey!"

And so, with a flash of light, a cloud of dust and a beatty "Hi-Yo, Dinah!" he was gone, leavin' Pa with a problem!

consents to advise

What I needed was some sound advice. Advice from some of the top pros in the filmag field.

I located Bob Price on Mount No. 3 at the Coney Island Pony Ride. There are Pony Rides closer to Manhattan, of course, but Bob likes to patronize this one which is run by one-armed Bill Bronson. You see, Bill was once a leadin' film authority until Bob talked his arm off in a conversation about Westerns.

Havin' just completed a superb "Trooper Mount" before an audience of awed five-year-olds, Bob was obviously in high spirits. Just the time to get a friendly tip!

Needless to say, the horse finished last and I ended up havin' to swap my spare exciter lamp for a subway token to the Bronx.

Once in that fabled borough, I had no trouble locatin' Sam Sherman's hideaway—I merely followed a trail of Milt Frome stills. Sam was also in a buoyant mood as he had just completed the masterly job of cementin' Bob Custer's head onto Bob Baker's body, frame by frame, throughout a print of *THE LAST STAND*; thereby remedyin' a monumental error in castin' committed by Universal in 1938.



This shot from Warner Brothers' *GUNS OF THE TIMBERLAND* reminds me of th' time I fell off th' balcony at th' al' Arcadia Theatre. I was headin' down from th' "baath" for a bag a' popcorn when I missed th' stairwell and, bay, was O! Pa blue! Below, that hold stuntman Al Wyatt has an Frank Sinatra in *THE MANCHURIAN CANDIDATE* share is similar to th' one my chiropractor had on me after my fall!





From parapets to pachyderms—from costles to cats! There's nothin' like good action photos such as these to put life back into Ol' Pa's tired blood! Yes, I like movies of all kinds, both old and new, but my extro special favorites are those with spine-tinglin' situations and excitement. When performers like Al Hedison, *THE SON OF ROBIN HOOD*, go into the oct and lane Reed puts on her animal routine, Ol' Pa really "turns on."



Sam's a jovial cuss with a lot of grit and he promised to give me all the help I'd need, but "not too soon."

'mood music?'

That settled it. There was nothin' for Ol' Pa to do but buckle down and get at it. Get it over and done with. Out of the way. *Finis*. But first, just to get in the mood, why not slap somethin' on Ol' Betsy? Somethin' stimulin'.

THE THRILL OF IT ALL proved to be an interestin' flick but somehow that title just didn't seem too apropos for Ol' Pa's project at hand.

Then suddenly, it hit me! Like a bolt outta the blue, completely without warnin', my title came to me! **THE SMASHIN' STUNTMEN!** Beautiful! That's what I'd call it! Nothin' could say it better!

So now I'm all set to plunge right into the article of the issue, but oops—there's no more space left!

Such a pity, but that's the way the magazine racks! Well, Ol' Pa'll just have to put a damper on his journalistic ambitions for now and get back to the rewind bench. May you all have many hours of trouble-free projectin' out there!

END



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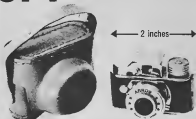
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